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Form 1.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

573243

Patents Act 1952-1969

31841/84

APPLICATION FOR A PATENT

COMPLETE AFTER PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION No. 31841/84

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1 (1) MARTIN TERENCE COLE
XXc of 7 Loxwood Avenue, Keysborough,
Victoria, Australia, 3173

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hereby apply for the grant of a Patent for an invention entitled: (1)
"IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO ^{POLLUTION} SMOKE DETECTION APPARATUS"

APPLICATION ACCEPTED AND AMENDMENTS

ALLOWED 12-4-88.

which is described in the accompanying PROVISIONAL
~~COMPLETE~~ specification.

My address for service is Messrs. Edwd. Waters & Sons, Patent Attorneys,
~~Quax~~

LODGED AT SUB-OFFICE 50 Queen Street, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

12 AUG 1988

Melbourne

DATED this 11th day of August 1983
MARTIN TERENCE COLE

By my Patent Attorneys
EDWD. WATERS & SONS

(3) Signa-
ture (s) of
Applicant (s)
or
Seal of
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its Articles of
Association.

By:

L.J. Dyson
Registered Patent Attorney

To:

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Edwd. Waters & Sons,
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Patents Act 1952-1969

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In support of the Application made by⁽¹⁾
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of invention.

for a Patent. for an invention entitled:⁽²⁾
"IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO SMOKE DETECTION APPARATUS"

I⁽¹⁾
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do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:

1. I am
~~We are~~ the applicant for the patent.
2. I am
~~We are~~ the actual inventor of the invention.

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the actual inventor of the invention, and the facts upon which I am
We are entitled to
make the application, are as follow:

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of Actual
Inventor or
Inventors.

I am
We are the assignee of the said⁽⁵⁾

DECLARED at Keysborough
this eleventh day of August 19 83

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Applicants.

(6)

To:

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(12) PATENT ABRIDGMENT (11) Document No. AU-B-31841/84
(19) AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE (10) Acceptance No. 573243

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POLLUTION DETECTING APPARATUS

(51)4 International Patent Classification
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(56) Prior Art Documents
US 3480781
US 3588535

(57) Claim

1. Pollution detecting apparatus for use in a gas comprising:

light sensing, solid state photocell means for producing signals in response to light;

impedance matching buffer stage amplifier means responsive to said signals for producing an amplified signal at an impedance level adapted for further processing;

gain controlled amplifier stage means responsive to said amplified signal and to a gain controlling signal for producing a gain controlled signal;

output amplifier stage means responsive to said gain controlled signal for producing an output signal;

temperature sensor means for producing a temperature signal indicative of ambient temperature;

gain control network means responsive to said temperature signal and to said output signal for producing said gain controlling signal;

said gain control network means being adjustable to compensate for temperature dependence of the said signals produced by said light sensing solid state photocell means; and

means to deliver said gain controlling signal to said gain controlled amplifier stage means.

573243

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Form 10

PATENTS ACT 1952-69

COMPLETE SPECIFICATION

(ORIGINAL)

Class

Int. Class

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Complete Specification Lodged:

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Related Art:

This document contains the
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printing.

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Complete Specification for the invention entitled:

POLLUTION

IMPROVEMENTS RELATING TO SMOKE DETECTION APPARATUS
Melbourne

The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to me



This invention relates to a device for the detection of smoke by light scatter techniques and particularly to a light detection means.

Devices are known for the detection of smoke by light scatter techniques. Such devices incorporate a light source configured to irradiate a volume of air provided in a sampling region in which smoke particles may be suspended. Light scattered off said particles is collected on a light detector means. The amplitude of the signal produced from said light detector is an indication of the quantity of smoke suspended in the air.

Particularly sensitive versions of such smoke detectors are also capable of monitoring air pollution. Such high sensitivity enables detection of fires at the earliest possible (incipient) stage, whereby fires may be controlled with portable extinguishers by local personnel before smoke levels become dangerous to life. Such detectors require a sensitivity as high as 20 micrograms per cubic metre for woodsmoke, equivalent to a visual range of 40 km. To achieve such sensitivity, the light source has included a Xenon flashtube and the light detector has been a photomultiplier tube, while both devices are mounted in conjunction with a sampling chamber through which samples of airborne smoke are passed.

A prime objective of the present invention is to provide an improved smoke detector in which the disadvantages inherent with prior art devices are at least substantially overcome.

The disadvantages of the photomultiplier tubes are:

- 1) being vacuum-tube devices, they are prone to breakage, damage by vibration, loss of vacuum pressure or gaseous poisoning;
- 2) operational life is limited;
- 3) care must be taken to avoid exposure to bright light such as sunlight;
- 4) sensitivity variation from unit to unit may be a factor of ten or more;



- 5) their sensitivity is affected by temperature;
- 6) they are of comparatively very high cost.
- 7) they require a costly power supply;
- 8) they are large and unsuitable for
miniaturization.

5

According to one aspect of the present invention it is proposed that the photomultiplier tube be replaced by an extremely sensitive solid-state light detector.

10 The present invention is directed to the use of solid-state detection technology which was hitherto considered impossible at room temperature and at reasonable cost.

15 Successful solid-state detection results in a more reliable device enabling problems inherent in thermionic valve technology (photomultipliers) such as an extraordinary spread (10 to 1) in sensitivity from device to device, fragility, ageing, degradation when exposed to bright light and the need for a special high voltage power supply of high stability.

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According to one embodiment the present invention comprises pollution detecting apparatus for use in a gas comprising:

light sensing, solid state photocell means for producing signals in response to light;

impedance matching buffer stage amplifier means responsive to said signals for producing an amplified signal at an impedance level adapted for further processing;

gain controlled amplifier stage means responsive to said amplified signal and to a gain controlling signal for producing a gain controlled signal;

output amplifier stage means responsive to said gain controlled signal for producing an output signal;

temperature sensor means for producing a temperature signal indicative of ambient temperature;

gain control network means responsive to said temperature signal and to said output signal for producing



said gain controlling signal;

said gain control network means being ajustable to
compensate for temperature dependence of the said signals
produced by said light sensing solid state photocell means;
5 and

means to deliver said gain controlling signal to
said gain controlled amplifier stage means.

According to a preferred embodiment of the
invention, the pollution detecting apparatus is a smoke
10 detector comprising a sampling chamber which is internally a
round tube, containing a series of devices to absorb light
reflected off its internal walls. Air flow through the
chamber is achieved by means of two coupling tubes, mounted
at right angles to the chamber. Between the coupling tubes
15 is a sealed reflector and window for a Xenon flash tube as
described in my co-pending Australian Application No.
PG0822/83, filed 12th August, 1983, to irradiate the
particles within the chamber. At one end of the chamber is
an extremely sensitive light detector, while at the opposite
20 end is an axial-light absorber as described in my co-pending
Australian Application No. PG0821/83, filed 12th August,
1983. The chamber is airtight except for the coupling
tubes. Within one coupling tube is an electronic air flow
sensor, air flow being achieved by means of an external fan.
25 Housed beside the chamber is the necessary electronics
circuit boards.



The sampling chamber is particularly suited for use with the sampling device or point disclosed in my co-pending Australian Application No. PG0116/83 filed 4th July, 1983.

Cross-reference is also made to my co-pending Australian Application No. PG1975/83 filed on 21st October, 1983, disclosing optical air pollution monitoring apparatus and No. PG4919/84 filed on 9th May, 1984 disclosing an improved solid state anemometers and temperature, all of which are hereby incorporated herein as part of the disclosure.

With the need for increased ruggedness in case of rough handling, lighter weight to reduce freight costs, enhanced aesthetics, lower cost in high volume and reduced assembly time; a specialized aluminium extrusion is used.

While retaining the basic tubular design, the addition of mounting screw-flutes reduces machining requirements, as does the provision of convenient slots to hold one large electronics circuit board. Suitable web design allows for convenient heat-sinking of electronic power devices.

Provision of a flat 'table' as a part of the extrusion design, simplifies the mating of coupling tubes and the flash window, obviating saddle-shaped couplings. Opposite this table a parallel flat surface is provided to aid clamping for machining operations.

Jig fabrication of components is thereby dispensed with leading to greater dimensional accuracy and repeatability in production resulting in improved quality control. Furthermore simple assembly provides for simplified servicing. The detector of the present invention is of long life solid-state design with the exception of the Xenon flash-tube. In my co-pending application concurrently filed with this application a novel focusing reflector designed to accommodate the unusual shape of the Xenon flash tube is disclosed. This improved light source with reduced flash energy will extend the maintenance period beyond two years under continuous operation.

The provision of an improved light absorber with sampling chamber as disclosed in my abovementioned co-pending application allows significant chamber length reduction to permit rack mounting of the detector in restricted spaces such as telephone exchanges and other equipment rooms. Furthermore the detector of the present invention can be operated from an unregulated 24 volt D.C. supply which could include standby batteries having a supply tolerance in the range of 20-28 volts D.C. in conformity with most conventional fire alarm systems.

~~Accordingly, the present invention provides in one aspect a PIN photodiode cell responsive to low levels of light connected to an impedance matching buffer stage, a gain controlled amplifier stage and an output amplifier stage; a gain control network controlled by a temperature sensor for receiving an amplified signal from said output stage the gain being adjusted to compensate for temperature dependence of the photodiode signal.~~

Conveniently the solid-state photocell is a PIN photodiode cell adapted to be operated in a zero bias photovoltaic mode. Thus extremely high sensitivity is achieved with maximum signal to noise ratio. The detector is coupled with a preamplifier as defined of extremely low noise and high stability over a wide temperature range.

The PIN photodiode cell operating in said zero-bias photovoltaic mode, exhibits variable non linear sensitivity to low light levels at varying temperature levels. Thus the output of the cell must be accurately calibrated over an operating temperature range of -20° to 50°C .

Conveniently the temperature sensor and photodiode are maintained in an equivalent thermal situation or in thermal contact such that any temperature difference between the two is minimal.

Accordingly the output from the combination of said temperature sensor and gain control network is non-linear in inverse proportion to the non linearity of the photodiode cell whereby temperature dependence of said cell is substantially eliminated.



There is also provided a power supply filter network to prevent or restrict the injection of noise into any stage of the circuit. Electrical connections for the signal, supply and ground are made using shielded cable.

- 5 A preferred embodiment of the invention will be described in greater detail having reference to the accompanying drawings in which

Figure 1 is a sectional view of an air sampling chamber,

- Figure 2 is a block diagram showing the cell and compensating amplifier circuit,

Figure 3 is a partial view of the sampling chamber showing the lens and detector assembly,

Figure 4 shows an interference shielding container.

- With reference to Figure 1 the detector includes a sampling chamber 70 including a series of irises 21, 22 to absorb and dissipate light reflected off the walls. Coupling tubes 50 are provided to circulate ambient air from an area under fire surveillance into the chamber 70 across region 72 which is subjected to light from an Xenon flash tube in housing 60. Air flow is achieved by a fan (not shown). The length of the air sampling chamber is critical to prevent incidental light being detected and the provision of a novel light absorber 10 enabled a considerable shortening of the tube.

- 25 With reference to Figure 2 the solid-state cell 1 is preferably a PIN photodiode responsive to low light levels and presenting a small signal to an impedance-matching buffer stage 2 connected to a gain-controlled amplifier stage 3 and an output amplifier stage 4. The amplified signal is then fed back to a gain-control network 5 controlled by a temperature sensor 6. The sensor and the PIN photodiode are maintained in close thermal contact such that temperature difference between the two is minimal under variable operating conditions.

- 35 The gain of the gain controlled amplifier stage 3 is adjusted to compensate for the temperature dependence of the small signal from PIN photodiode 1.



The output of the temperature sensor and the gain control network is non linear in inverse proportion with the non-linearity of the PIN photodiode cell such that temperature dependence of the cell signal is substantially
5 eliminated.

The solid-state detector cell 1 must be small to minimize the capacitance which could otherwise result in reduced sensitivity to the flash rise time of about 1 micro-second from the flash tube. As a result the photon or light
10 beam capture area is small compared with a conventional photomultiplier tube. Therefore a focusing lens 17 is provided with associated mounting hardware as shown in Figure 3.

Referring to Figure 3 and 4 the preamplifier circuit
15 is encapsulated in epoxy 15, the circuit being constructed on a printed circuit board mounted against the base 9. To overcome internal reflections, to protect the cell, and to prevent the ingress of epoxy during manufacture a detector attachment 16 is provided. The container 10 also houses the
20 lens assembly 17. The preamplifier, detector cell optics and housing become a self contained and separately tested plug-in module connected by means of shielded cable 8. The container 10 includes a base 9 tightly fitted to the cylinder section. The flange 11 supporting the lens is a
25 sliding fit in the cylinder section at the other end and retained by a grub screw 12. The lens flange includes a mounting 14 for a lens assembly 17 and a sealing O-ring mounted in groove 13. The use of the sealing ring allows
30 than atmospheric pressure.

The lens mounting arrangement facilitates removal of the lens or detector assembly to allow easy access to the sampling chamber for servicing purposes.

The PIN photodiode cell is operated in a zero-bias
35 photovoltaic mode which suffers several disadvantages such as lower speed, lower stability, smaller dynamic range, higher temperature coefficient and reduced optical bandwidth

- 8 -
when compared with normal photocurrent mode. However a
major advantage of zero flicker noise is achievable which
allows for maximum possible signal to noise ratio to be
obtained. Furthermore the mentioned disadvantages can be com-
5 pensated for as described herein.

CLAIMS

THE CLAIMS DEFINING THE INVENTION ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Pollution detecting apparatus for use in a gas comprising:

light sensing, solid state photocell means for producing signals in response to light;

impedance matching buffer stage amplifier means responsive to said signals for producing an amplified signal at an impedance level adapted for further processing;

gain controlled amplifier stage means responsive to said amplified signal and to a gain controlling signal for producing a gain controlled signal;

output amplifier stage means responsive to said gain controlled signal for producing an output signal;

temperature sensor means for producing a temperature signal indicative of ambient temperature;

gain control network means responsive to said temperature signal and to said output signal for producing said gain controlling signal;

said gain control network means being adjustable to compensate for temperature dependence of the said signals produced by said light sensing solid state photocell means; and

means to deliver said gain controlling signal to said gain controlled amplifier stage means.

2. Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the solid-state photocell means comprises a PIN photodiode cell adapted for operation at a zero bias photovoltaic mode to achieve extremely high sensitivity at maximum signal to noise ratio.

3. Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the temperature sensor means and the solid state photocell means are maintained in an equivalent thermal environment.



4. Apparatus according to claim 3 wherein said sensor means and said solid state, photocell means are in thermal contact with one another.

5. Apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims wherein said temperature sensor means and said gain control network means produce a first non-linear output and said solid state photocell means produces a second non-linear output, the non-linearity of said first output being in inverse proportion to the non-linearity of said second output, whereby temperature dependence of said solid state photocell means is substantially eliminated.

6. Apparatus according to claim 1 including power supply filter means for supplying biasing power to said impedance matching buffer stage means, and said output amplifier stage means, while at the same time at least restricting the injection of noise thereinto.

7. Apparatus according to any one of claims 1 to 6 wherein the apparatus is a smoke detector.

8. Apparatus according to any one of the preceding claims including means forming a chamber having means for admitting sample air from a remote location, said photocell being positioned in said chamber, light absorbent means accommodated in said chamber and spaced from said photocell, and a light source for emitting light into said chamber between said photocell and said light absorbent means.

9. Apparatus according to claim 8 including means for exhausting air from said chamber, said light source being positioned to emit light into said chamber between said air admitting means and said air exhausting means.



- 11 -

10. Apparatus according to claim 9 wherein said chamber is airtight except for said air admitting means and said air exhausting means.

DATED this 24th day of March, 1988

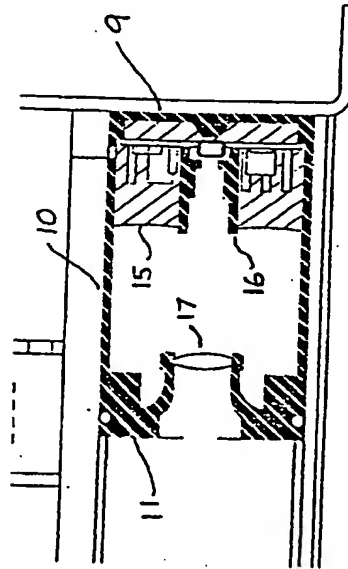
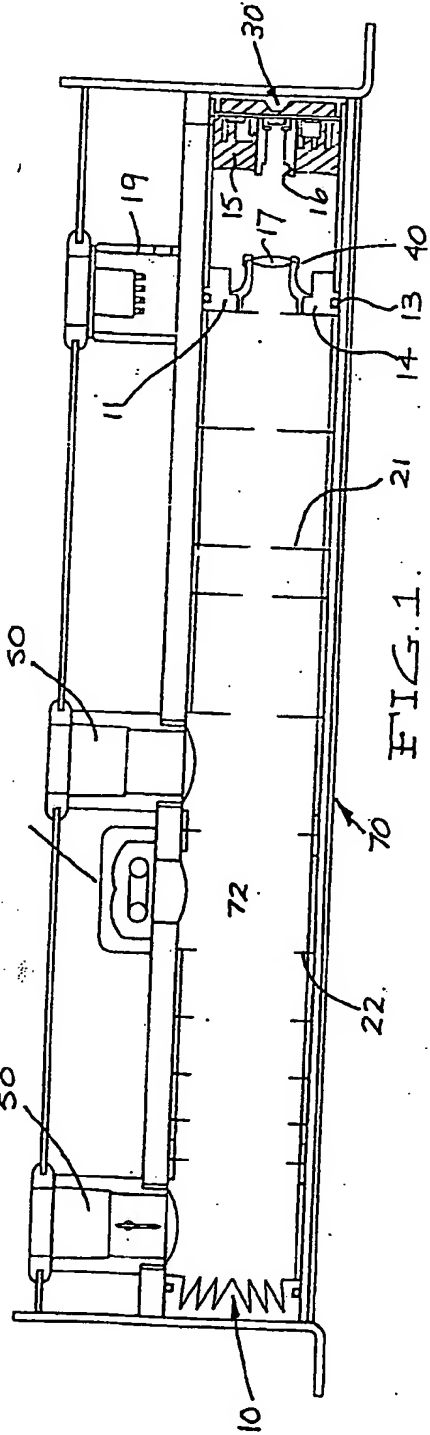
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DRAWINGS



10 304 3184

31841/84

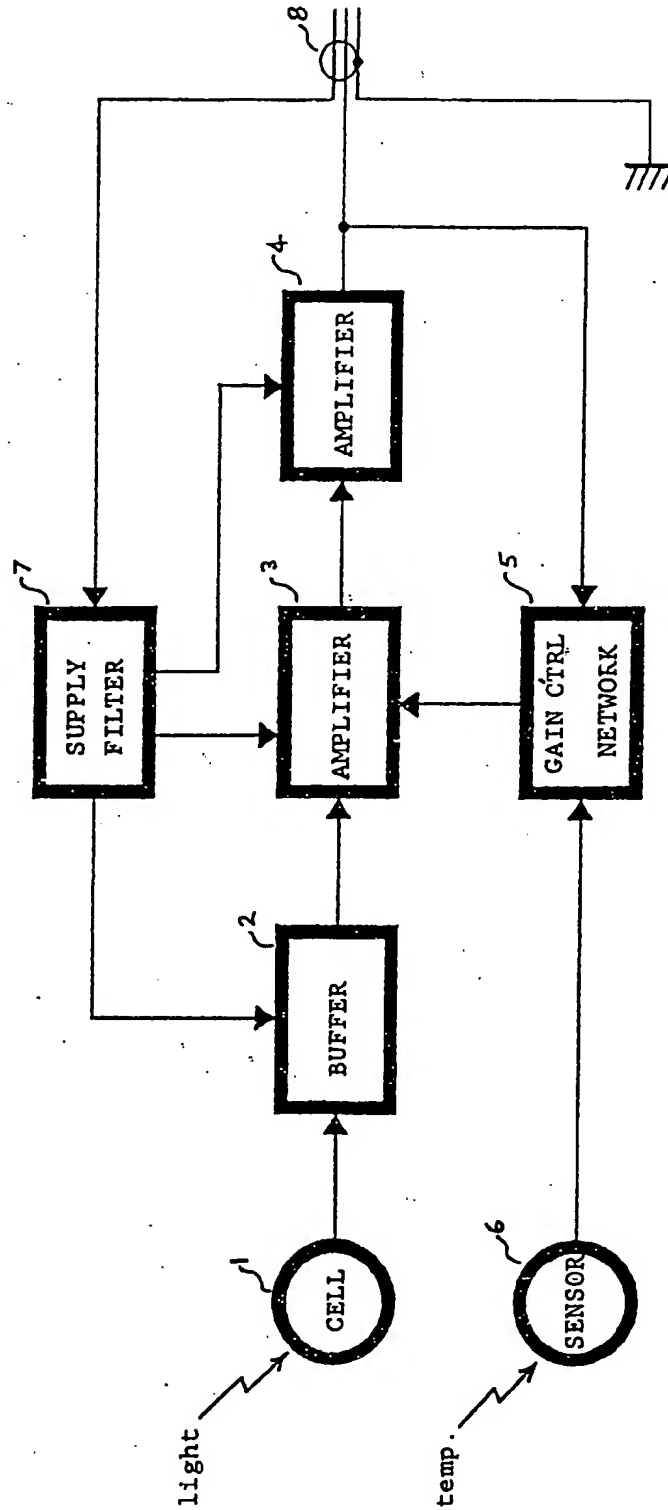


FIG. 2.

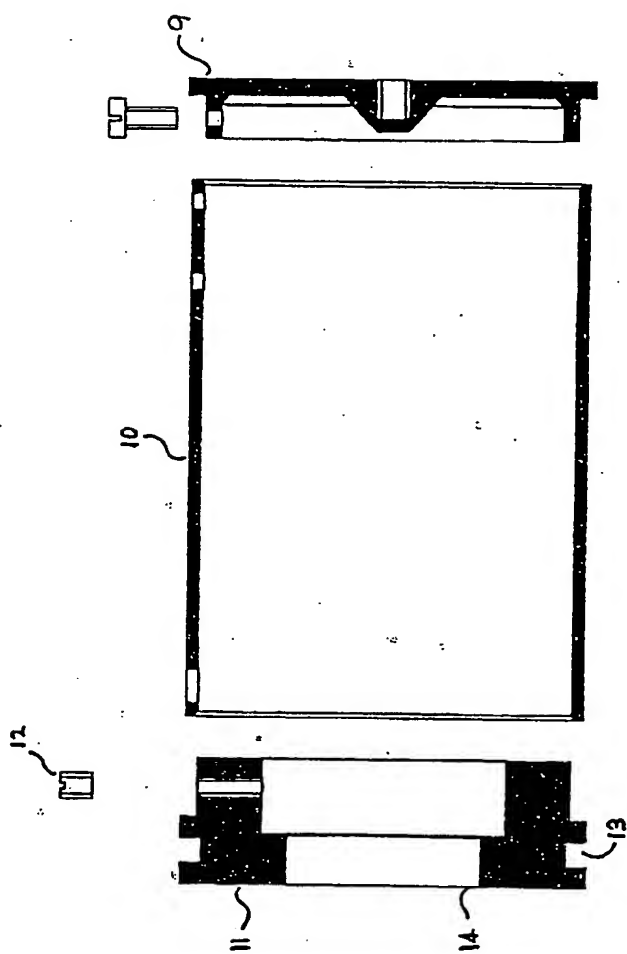


FIG. 4.

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